

Message Text

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FOR MR. GLITTMAN AND COL KERSEY ONLY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: NATO, AORG

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM ASYG WALSH RE ELDON SMITH

REF: STATE 12253

1. THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS RECEIVED FROM ASYG WALSH:

BEGIN QUOTE:

13 JANUARY, 1978

AMBASSADOR HARRY G. BARNES, JR.,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 043359

DEAR MR. AMBASSADOR,

I HAVE JUST READ THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AIRGRAM
ADVISING THAT YOU HAVE OFFICIALLY TAKEN OVER THE
RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN
SERVICE. MAY I EXTEND MY CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR
ASSUMPTION OF THIS VERY IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT.

YOU MAY RECALL THAT DURING YOUR STOP IN BRUSSELS IN NOVEMBER, ELDON SMITH AND I DISCUSSED WITH YOU A REQUEST FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO FOR THE EXTENSION OF MR. SMITH'S TOUR FROM 31ST MAY, 1978 TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1978. THE DEPARTMENT HAD JUST RESPONDED LIMITING THE EXTENSION TO 31ST AUGUST. YOU SUGGESTED THAT I GO BACK TO WASHINGTON ON THE MATTER, AND IF A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION HAD NOT BEEN WORKED OUT BY THE TIME YOU ASSUMED YOUR NEW DUTIES TO DROP YOU A LINE. I AM TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOUR INVITATION.

I REQUESTED THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO ASK THE DEPARTMENT FOR A RECONSIDERATION. FURTHER, DURING MR. GOODBY'S VISIT TO BRUSSELS AT THE TIME OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS LAST MONTH I DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH HIM AND HE INDICATED HE WOULD PURSUE IT IN WASHINGTON. HE MAY ALREADY HAVE CONTACTED YOUR OFFICE. IN ANY EVENT, I HAVE AS YET RECEIVED NO FURTHER WORD ON THE REQUEST.

IN BRIEF, THE FACTS ARE THESE:

IN FEBRUARY 1974 MR. SMITH WAS SECONDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO NATO FOR THE DUAL POSITION
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 043359

OF CONTROLLER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE, A KEY POSITION ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF. HIS TOUR WAS TO TERMINATE 31ST MAY, 1978, IN KEEPING WITH HIS REACHING AGE 60. IN JULY 1977, THE SECRETARY GENERAL REQUESTED HE BE EXTENDED UNTIL 31ST DECEMBER, 1978 FOR THE REASONS STATED IN THE ATTACHED LETTER, WHICH WAS ENDORSED BY THE AMERICAN DELEGATION AND FORWARDED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

AS POINTED OUT IN THE ATTACHED LETTER, 1978 WILL BE THE CRITICAL YEAR IN THE FIVE-YEAR INFRASTRUCTURE CYCLE AS THE PROGRAMME FOR THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PERIOD MUST BE NEGOTIATED THIS YEAR. THE NEED FOR PROGRAMME EXPANSION (STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE BROWN IN THE RECENT MINISTERIAL MEETINGS) AND AGREEMENT ON THE COST SHARING FORMULA WILL MAKE THIS NEGOTIATION PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT. IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY USEFUL TO NATO AND THE UNITED STATES TO HAVE AT THE HELM DURING THIS PERIOD SOMEONE WITH BACKGROUND AND DEMONSTRATED EFFECTIVENESS IN CHAIRING THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE. THE

SCHEDULE AGREED TO BY ALL NATIONS AT THE DECEMBER

MEETING OF THE DEFENSE MINISTERS CALLS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE PROGRAMME IN THE MINISTERIAL MEETING IN DECEMBER 1978 WITH THE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THERETO LIKELY TO BE THE MOST CRUCIAL IN SHAPING THE PROGRAMME.

WHILE THE 90-DAY EXTENSION THROUGH AUGUST WILL BE OF SOME ASSISTANCE IN THE MULTIPLE TURNOVER IMPACT, IT DOES NOT MEET THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REQUEST FOR MR. SMITH'S PRESENCE DURING THE CRITICAL STATE OF THE NEGOTIATION AND APPROVAL OF THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PROGRAMME. (THE OVERLAP WITH THE NEXT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 STATE 043359

DEPUTY CONTROLLER PROVIDED BY THE 90-DAY HAS BEEN LARGELY OFFSET BY A 2-MONTH POSTPONEMENT IN THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS.)

I MIGHT POINT OUT THAT MR. SMITH HAS PERFORMED IN A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE MANNER AS REFLECTED IN REPORTS BY FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARIES GENERAL TUCKER AND LABERGE, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL PANSA, AND FOREIGN SERVICE INSPECTOR GENERAL SAYRE. DR. LABERGE, MY IMMEDIATE PREDECESSOR AS ASG, AND PRESENT UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY, FULLY SHARES MY VIEW AND CONCERN ON THE REQUESTED EXTENSION, AND I AM SURE WILL BE HAPPY TO PROVIDE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION SHOULD YOU CARE TO CONTACT HIM.

IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS POSITION FROM THE STANDPOINT OF AMERICAN INTERESTS, I AGREE WITH THE DELEGATION THAT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE IT SHOULD BE FILLED BY ANOTHER AMERICAN WHEN MR. SMITH DEPARTS. HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT THE SELECTION WILL BE MADE BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL FROM WHAT WILL DOUBTLESS BE A NUMBER OF STRONG CANDIDATES FROM VARIOUS NATIONS, AND THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT ANOTHER AMERICAN WILL BE SELECTED. THE DEGREE OF AMERICAN COOPERATION IN ACCEDING TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REQUEST FOR THIS EXTENSION WILL HARDLY PASS UNNOTICED.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S ACTION IN LIMITING MR. SMITH'S EXTENSION TO 31ST AUGUST WAS BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER TO OBTAIN A REPLACEMENT AT THAT TIME. IT MIGHT BE POINTED OUT UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 05 STATE 043359

THAT THE 31ST DECEMBER DATE REQUESTED WAS BASED
SOLELY UPON THE WORK REQUIREMENTS AND WAS IN

KEEPING WITH A SUGGESTION FROM THE DEPARTMENT THAT
THE REQUEST FOR EXTENSION BE LIMITED TO THE SHORTEST
NECESSARY PERIOD. I AM SURE MR. SMITH WILL NOT
FIND MID-WINTER THE MOST CONVENIENT DEPARTURE DATE.
IF EXTENDING THE APPOINTMENT TO SPRING OF 1979
WOULD FACILITATE LOCATING A SUITABLE CANDIDATE,
I FEEL IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO MR. SMITH AND
WELCOMED BY BOTH THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND MYSELF.

WHILE I APPRECIATE THE NEED FOR ASSIGNMENT RULES,
IN THIS CASE IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THAT THE EXERCISE
OF A MINIMUM DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY WOULD BE ALL
TO THE ADVANTAGE OF BOTH THE U.S. AND NATO. I
WILL APPRECIATE YOUR PERSONAL CONSIDERATION OF THIS
REQUEST.

SINCERELY,

JOHN B. WALSH

ATTACH.

(LETTER FROM MR. VILLALOBOS TO COLONEL KERSEY
DATED JULY 27, 1977)

END OF TEXT.

2. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AMBASSADOR BENNETT HAS
NOMINATED CHARLES WILDS AS THE U.S. CANDIDATE
TO REPLACE ELDON SMITH IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTTEL.
WE INTEND TO PREPARE A REPLY TO THE LETTER QUOTED
ABOVE EMPHASIZING THAT WE APPRECIATE MR. WALSH'S
DESIRE TO APPOINT A U.S. CANDIDATE TO REPLACE
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PAGE 06 STATE 043359

ELDON SMITH, AND THAT CHARLES WILDS IS AN EXCELLENT
REPLACEMENT, FULLY CAPABLE OF EFFECTIVELY CHAIRING
THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE DURING THE CRITICAL
PERIOD OF NEGOTIATIONS OF A PROGRAM FOR THE NEXT
FIVE YEARS.

3. ARE THERE ANY OTHER POINTS THAT SHOULD BE MADE

IN THE REPLY?

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